

# **Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Program State Plan for the State of Iowa**

## **Program-Specific Requirements for Adult Education and Family Literacy Act Programs**

The State Plan must include a description of the following as it pertains to Adult Education and Literacy programs under Title II, the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

### **A. Aligning of Content Standards**

Describe how the eligible agency will, by July 1, 2016, align its content standards for adult education with State-adopted challenging academic content standards, as adopted under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (20 U.S.C. 6311(b)(1)).

Adult education programs offer a student-centered approach, in which instructors help participants set and achieve learning goals. Iowa adult education and literacy programs facilitate student progress by incorporating college and career readiness standards in instruction, sharing best practices and providing ongoing professional development and training for instructors, data specialists and coordinators of programs. Local programs measure educational levels and progress using standardized assessment tools and by following the assessment policy guidelines disseminated to programs annually. Providers record gains using the Tops Enterprise (TE®) online reporting system. The state and local providers use the data to analyze program performance.

All of Iowa's federally funded adult education programs are instituting the federal College and Career Readiness Standards, and have already incorporated the Common Core standards in the high school diploma programs as per Iowa's administrative rule 23.7(1) adopted January 14, 2015:

*b. The development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous and scientifically valid research available; and*

*c. Appropriate reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, distance education, and staff training practices aligned with content standards for adult education.*

In addition, local educational programs will continue to provide standards-based curriculum, instruction, and assessment focusing on the skills that enable learners to participate more fully within American society as citizens, workers, and family members. Funds will be released to eligible AEFLA programs to support professional development efforts in continued implementation of standards based instruction for 2016–2017.

### **B. Local Activities**

Describe how the State will, using the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA, fund each eligible provider to establish or operate programs that provide the adult education and literacy activities, including programs that provide such activities concurrently. The Unified or Combined State Plan must include at a minimum the scope, content, and organization of local activities.

## Adult Education and Literacy Activities (Section 203 of WIOA)

- Adult education;
- Literacy;
- Workplace adult education and literacy activities;
- Family literacy activities;
- English language acquisition activities;
- Integrated English literacy and civics education;
- Workforce preparation activities; or
- Integrated education and training that—
  1. Provides adult education and literacy activities, concurrently and contextually with both, workforce preparation activities, and workforce training for a specific occupation or occupational cluster, and
  2. Is for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

### Local Activities

The Iowa Department of Education will promote participation in adult education and family literacy programs through campaigns which include, but are not limited to, initiatives including workplace programs and career pathway development programs, by promoting research based practices and public and private sector partnerships to inform the public about adult education, literacy, and family literacy services. The one-stop System will be used as a vehicle to identify available educational and employment services, fiscal and human resources, and other client services to help this targeted population become literate and economically self-sufficient. The key objectives for core services are to promote accountability and transparency in investing in adult education and aligning performance accountability (enrollment, level gains, and core outcomes) to guide strategy development and drive continuous quality improvement are as follows:

- Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy program supports efforts to increase enrollment and retention by urging programs to offer flexible schedules, support services and year-round programs in attractive and age-appropriate settings. For program year 2014, a state goal to serve five percent of the total state population without a high school degree, 18 years and older, was started. This represents a 12 percent increase in enrollment in adult education and literacy programs since last year. In addition Iowa is actively raising public awareness of adult education with an initial statewide campaign. Iowa launched a branding campaign to promote public awareness of the effectiveness of adult education. This effort has provided support in the transition to the new state's assessment for awarding the high school equivalency diploma, effective January 2014. This statewide effort has been aimed at increasing access to services and connecting participants as quickly as possible to programs.
- Providers have been piloting and demonstrating innovative instructional methodologies, from individual to group activities, to meet the diverse needs of adult learners. Adult education programs offer a student-centered approach, in which instructors help participants set and achieve learning goals. Iowa adult education and literacy programs facilitate student progress by incorporating college and career readiness standards in instruction, sharing best practices and providing ongoing professional development and training for instructors, data specialists and coordinators of programs. Local programs measure educational levels and progress using standardized assessment tools and by following the assessment policy guidelines disseminated to programs annually. Providers record gains using the Tops Enterprise (TE®) online reporting system. The state and local providers use the data to analyze program performance.

In addition, through the introduction of STAR (Student Achievement in Reading), managed enrollment has been encouraged in each program to better direct explicit instruction in adult education and literacy classrooms. This approach supports the best practice model through student and instructor surveys as well as program performance. Additional programs will be able to adapt this approach once a cadre of state certified trainers are established in Iowa. This shift in classroom management requires a transition period and continual adjustments. Programs are excited about the results in the urban areas but continue to struggle with rural implementation.

The state benchmarks for each educational functioning level (EFL) remains the focus for local programs with performance-based funding and a targeted post-test rate of 60 percent for each program and each level of students served. This data is reviewed monthly during the coordinator webinar. Training from the state data specialist has made it possible for each program to review local data program wide as well as classroom specific. Iowa adult education and literacy programs help to ensure that adults have the skills needed to compete in the knowledge-based economy. This is in keeping with increasing economic opportunity and raising the standard of living in Iowa. Iowa's adult education and literacy programs have been associated with community colleges since 1968 and work together to facilitate adult learners' transition to post-secondary education. Pilots have been conducted and will be expanded to partner with credit and non-credit courses to encourage the transition of adult learners to a career pathway. The pilots are designed to increase the number of adult learners earning transferrable credit, marketable credential, and, or entering post-secondary education.

### **Planned Integrated Activities**

Collaboration, coordination, and cooperation have been the mainstays of the program from the beginning including: 1) mutual referrals, 2) assessment, 3) tracking client goals and progress, and 4) decisions regarding the planned delivery of services to the client. There has always been strong collaboration with federal employment training programs to help adults prepare for the workforce and become self-sufficient. Adult education and literacy programs, in their local communities, seek out working agreements with Iowa Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Department of Workforce Development, adult and juvenile court officials, and other service agencies.

With the increased awareness of the need for a workforce to be able to function in a highly technical environment, more emphasis is being placed on education. The adult education and literacy program has responded to this focus by supplying their services either in business and industry or in the classroom. The program is ready and able to provide assessment; instruction in basic academic skills; English literacy programs; workplace literacy; communication skills; and job seeking and retention skills.

### **Adult Basic Education**

The goal of the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program is to improve students' basic skills in language arts and mathematics. A model ABE program provides comprehensive services to meet the diverse educational needs of students and prepare them to transition to secondary education and job preparation classes

ABE programs include literacy (reading and writing) and computational skills necessary for functioning at levels comparable to students in the first through eighth grade. Courses may be remedial for students or they may provide educational opportunities for students who speak, but do not read, English. These programs are standards-based and are designed to teach the academic skills necessary for success, and to help students become more productive community members.

These programs are also designed to help students develop job readiness skills, find employment, advance on the job, or enter adult secondary education classes.

### **English Language Acquisition**

The total immigrant population in Iowa remains relatively small but increased by 2.5 percent over the past five years. In 2014, ESL services represented 47 percent of the total population served. As part of core services, English literacy services assist adults in becoming literate and obtaining the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency; assist adults who are parents in obtaining the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children; and assist adults in completing a secondary school education.

All of the funded adult education and literacy programs in Iowa provided ESL services, defined as a program of instruction designed to help individuals of limited English proficiency achieve competence in the English language. ESL classes are offered in a diverse cross section of Iowa counties, from urban areas that have an influx of immigrants from many nations to agricultural counties that have experienced a growth in their ESL population.

Iowa's adult education and literacy programs also make available, as needed, opportunities for English literacy/civics programs. These programs incorporate English literacy and civics education for immigrants and other students with limited English proficiency to participate effectively in the education, work and civic opportunities of this country. The programs include one or more aspects of civics education and may incorporate distance learning strategies and video services. EL/Civics programs comply with the National Reporting System (NRS) Performance Indicators.

Within the English Language Acquisition program, students are placed in appropriate skill-level classes through assessments of general language proficiency. There are six levels of instruction: beginning literacy, beginning low, beginning high, intermediate low, intermediate high, and advanced. The assessments for progressing from one level to another measure both general language proficiency and specific standards mastered. The key objectives for adult education English language acquisition are to:

- Provide stress-free and comfortable learning environments in order to reduce anxiety that interferes with obtaining language fluency;
- Integrate language acquisition with relevant life experiences stressing the importance of critical thinking, problem solving, and self-sufficiency;
- Use proficiency standards for assessing the major accomplishments of the students;
- Develop students' receptive English language skills of listening and reading comprehension;
- Develop students' productive English language skills of speaking and writing;
- Provide students with the ability to use English that is accurate and appropriate in a variety of academic and social settings; and
- Provide students with English language and citizenship instruction necessary to successfully complete the citizenship application and interview process.

### **Adult Secondary Education**

The primary goal of the Adult Secondary Education (ASE) programs is to provide a curriculum that enables adults to attain a Iowa high school equivalency diploma. The ASE programs are performance oriented and deliver instruction through processes that facilitate, measure, and certify learning outcomes. Programs are conducted within flexible time limits, are relevant to the practical needs of adults, and teach the skills and knowledge necessary for self-sufficiency and employment.

Iowa's adult education and literacy's high school equivalency preparation activities are focused on assisting adults in the completion of a high school credential. Community colleges and correctional institutions, throughout the state of Iowa, operate 61 HSED testing centers. Between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2014, Iowa awarded 3,408 equivalency diplomas.

## **Integrated Education and Training**

Integrated Education and Training (IET) is defined as an education model that “combines occupational skills training with adult education services to increase the educational and career advancement of participants. In programs that deliver IET, adults participate in both occupational skills training and adult education services at the same time.” Through the adult education professional development leadership contractor, modules on IET are offered as a facilitated online course. The modules take educators and agency administrators through the process of developing plans for implementing one of four instructional models. These models integrate basic skills (i.e. ELA or ABE) with technical or occupational skills instruction. Specific objectives for the IET are:

1. Analyze and cite reasons for implementing IET models after reviewing various resources;
2. Define key terms and components of IET models;
3. Assess the degree of readiness to implement an IET model; and
4. Identify which IET models are best suited for the students and identify next steps for implementation.

Finally, effective implementation of a comprehensive IET model requires well-planned and integrated coordination of the program structure, student support services, and classroom activities. The IET training modules provided below are several options for agencies to choose the best method to meet their adult students' needs.

1. Co-Teaching: The co-teaching model involves skills instruction in a particular in demand sector along with basic language instruction, delivered in an integrated fashion. Team teaching and co-teaching are the main strategies used to deliver the curriculum. The language and basic skills instructor deliver literacy and language education while the technical instructor teaches the related certificate or credentialing skills. After completion of the class, students are better prepared to transition to a related advanced class or employment through a career pathway.
2. Alternating Teaching: In alternating teaching, students enroll in two different, but coordinated courses. For example, students interested in healthcare careers might also attend a basic skills class. This class may incorporate important components of jobs, such as customer service and patient care, etc., along with basic language or reading skills. After attending the basic skills class, students go to a technology class to learn the digital literacy skills necessary to be successful in the workforce.

## **Workplace Education**

Workplace education programs, defined as literacy services that are offered for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of literacy skills, represent a growing trend in Iowa's adult education and literacy programs. In today's economy, employees must continually upgrade their skills to remain competitive. In addition to strong reading, math and communication skills, employees need skills in solving problems, adapting to rapid change and working in teams as defined in Section 203 of WIOA.

Onsite workplace education allows workers to apply basic academic concepts to everyday job tasks, resulting in a better trained, more productive workforce. Local programs have been working with

employers to identify skills employees need to be successful in their jobs and design a course of basic skills instruction around these needs. Instructors integrate examples and tools from the work environment to make learning relevant to the participant.

### **Workforce Training Activities**

Iowa adult education and literacy provides ongoing professional development for adult education and literacy programs on how to integrate job readiness skills into the basic curriculum and incorporate real world examples from a variety of work settings into academic instruction. Training has included the World Education course, "Integrating Career Awareness at Every Level." Iowa's focus has been to ensure that this integration occurs for English as a Second Language participants as well as with those preparing for High School Equivalency testing. Sessions during the adult education and literacy summer conference were dedicated to this topic. The development of the Adult Education and Literacy Plus Pathway pilot will include these elements for each functioning level in addition to workforce training specific to the designated career pathway.

### **Special Rule**

Each eligible agency awarding a grant or contract under this section shall not use any funds made available under this title for adult education and literacy activities for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are under the age of 16 and are enrolled or required to be enrolled in secondary school under State law, except that such agency may use such funds for such purpose if such programs, services, or activities are related to family literacy activities. In providing family literacy activities under this title, an eligible provider shall attempt to coordinate with programs and services that are not assisted under this title prior to using funds for adult education and literacy activities under this title for activities other than activities for eligible individuals.

## **C. Corrections Education and other Education of Institutionalized Individuals**

Describe how the State will establish and operate programs under section 225 of WIOA for corrections education and education of other institutionalized individuals, including how it will fund, in accordance with the requirements of Title II, subtitle C, any of the following academic programs for:

- a. Adult education and literacy activities;
- b. Special education, as determined by the eligible agency;
- c. Secondary school credit;
- d. Integrated education and training;
- e. Career pathways;
- f. Concurrent enrollment;
- g. Peer tutoring; and
- h. Transition to re-entry initiatives and other post release services with the goal of reducing recidivism.

Each eligible agency using funds provided under Programs for Corrections Education and Other Institutionalized Individuals to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution must give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within 5 years of participation in the program.

The Iowa Department of Corrections has been an excellent partner with Iowa's adult education and literacy programs. One of the Departments' major objectives is to provide educational and career and technical training to these incarcerated youth and adults. The IDOE will continue to work collaboratively with the Department of Corrections (DOC) in aligning their curriculum and student performance standards, data accountability system, and teacher training with the state-administered Adult Education and Family Literacy Program.

Iowa's adult education and literacy program employs innovative approaches to increase the education levels and self-sufficiency of inmates, while reducing the recidivism rate in Iowa. Corrections programs enrolled 653 participants in Iowa's information management system in PY 2014. Data sharing agreements have been reached and training provided to include all eligible adult education participants in reporting. This information will be used by both the Department of Education and the Department of Corrections to improve services offered in correctional education programs, to streamline services and to maximize benefits.

Iowa's approach to corrections education enrolls participants through state correctional institutions and through local correctional facilities. Effective through an MOU and the use of shared state leadership funds, all correctional programs are held accountable to the required common benchmarks (additional tracking of release dates for tracking follow-up will be implemented) through the Iowa's Assessment Policy. Funds awarded from the AEFLA program funds may be used to support the correctional programs in providing allowable academic programs within the twenty percent expenditure cap. The option to use funds for the purpose of Section 225 will be available in the competitive application for Section 231 funds. Details of their activities and use of funds specific to corrections will be required and collected through lowagrants as eligible providers describe their AEL activities. Currently, state funds administered through the DOC and awarded to five community colleges has exceeded the capped funds available through 231 for corrections and therefore no federal funds in Iowa is being used to provide adult education programs for adult students in the nine state institutions. The DOC contract, in partnership with the community colleges and the Iowa Department of Education adult education and literacy team works to establish the level of staff, curriculum and program standards to be offered in each of the nine state facilities. With additional focus on transition services and reducing recidivism, the use of federal funds might be applied during the multiyear grant (2017-2020) to support and extend the state funded academic programs to assist participants in acquiring the basic skills and competencies necessary to move from an institutional setting into the workforce and community.

Programs will provide adult education instruction at all levels of basic academic skills, for students who meet the eligibility requirements for enrollment. Participants in correctional settings must qualify for adult education and literacy activities by lacking sufficient mastery of basic educational skills, or have not obtained a high school diploma or its equivalent. The use of funds will include all allowable activities detailed in Sec. 225(b)(1-8). Particular emphasis will be in developing programs that integrate the basic skills instruction with life skills, employability skills (which includes digital literacy) to help participants acquire necessary abilities to become and remain self-sufficient after leaving prison. Transition focused activities include pre-apprenticeship efforts as well as integrated education and training activities that are in partnership with the apprenticeship efforts. Corrections will continue to be a partner in the career pathway efforts to ensure that instructional activities are aligned with regional needs at each correctional location. Iowa's adult education and literacy program gives priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave correctional institutions within five years of participation in adult education programs.

#### **Requested Revision(s)**

Requested Revision: Item partially addressed: Update State Plan narrative.

FINAL REVISIONS: ACCEPTABLE

## **D. Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education Program**

### **1. Describe how the State will establish and operate Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education programs under Section 243 of WIOA, for English language learners who are adults, including professionals with degrees and credentials in their native countries.**

The Iowa Department of Education will leverage past experiences with providing English literacy and civics education in meeting the new requirements under WIOA. Programs will be established through an application for Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IECLE), section 243, as described in detail in VI.d.2 and require applicants to provide a narrative describing plans to provide literacy, English language acquisition (aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS)) and civics education along with program access to integrated education and training services. In addition, each program will ensure access to career advising for each participant while engaging in occupationally relevant education and training that is aligned to a regionally developed career pathway. The application will be reviewed and scored by the IDOE to ensure compliance and quality of services. Some current practices within which could be adopted to an Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) program include the following service delivery:

- As an awarded eligible provider, the local community college offers classroom (English language acquisition and civics education) and/or blended learning instruction to a specific cohort of students. By partnering with other community college departments, including but not limited to advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and information technology timely and relevant occupational skills that support in-demand regional employers is being provided to the cohort of participants. A recent example includes an I-BEST model approach for English language acquisition and civics education participants as CNC operators (which has been identified through sector partnership work as in-demand with a career pathway depicting a progression of ladders and lattices to other occupations and or training) with integrated contextual and employability skills offered over a 16 week period. The course includes key objectives related to building basic skills and becoming certified through an occupational assessment. As appropriate, the training includes introductions to regional employers and hands-on training, internships or apprenticeships to build work experience opportunities for cohort participants.

#### **Requested Revision(s)**

Requested Revision: Item was partially addressed.

FINAL REVISIONS: ACCEPTABLE

### **2. Describe how the State will fund, in accordance with the requirements of title II, subtitle C, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education services and how the funds will be used for those services.**

The Iowa Department of Education (IDOE) is the designated state agency responsible for administering funds and providing program/performance oversight to eligible local entities for the provision of section 243, Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE). During grant



year 2016-17, the IDOE will implement a competitive application process for IELCE funding that will determine the eligible entities that will be awarded funds starting July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020. Through the RFP process, IDOE will identify, assess, and award multi-year grants to eligible entities throughout the state and to ensure that access of services is provided in every county based on need. Funds will be used to support the operational expenses of local IELCE programs, including teacher salaries and benefits, classroom supplies, textbooks, and other items necessary to carry out instruction in English language acquisition, workforce preparation activities, and civics education.

During the initial period of the grant submission process, any eligible agency that contacts the agency with an interest in participating will be provided the information needed. In addition, the IDOE will actively promote the release of the funding opportunity through the state grant process, among all eligible providers and will be conducting regionally face to face and webinar bidders conference to address frequently asked questions for new and potential applicants. The IDOE requires all eligible providers for section 243 to use the same application process, the state grant management system, lowagrants. The IDOE uses the considerations specified in section 231(e) of WIOA to fund eligible providers. Entities must provide narrative details to demonstrate how they will meet each consideration along with alignment of English language acquisition with the CCRS. In addition, each program will demonstrate their connection to a career pathway and if access to career advising is embedded in the activity. The review of proposals will include rating responses to each of the 13 considerations. To determine if an applicant is an entity of demonstrated effectiveness, all applicants will be required to provide data demonstrating their ability to improve English language acquisition and civics education concurrently and contextually workplace skills, along with access to workbased learning through an integrated education and training model of instruction. Prior recipients of English Literacy and Civics Education funds under the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) will use data from Iowa's student data management system, Tops Enterprise, to show effectiveness in meeting state-negotiated performance measures for English as a second language (ESL) participants. New organizations will be provided forms to show demonstrated student learning gain, specific to ESL learners. Each application will be reviewed to determine whether it meets the standard of demonstrated effectiveness. Similar to the competition for 225 and 231 funds, the application will be reviewed by a panel and scored according to a point-based scoring rubric weighting each of the considerations. Applications that do not provide sufficient evidence of demonstrated effectiveness will be eliminated from the competition. Funded entities will be monitored and required to demonstrate continuous quality improvement.

**TIMELINE:** The following steps will be taken in conducting the IELCE competition:

- January/February 2017: IDOE publishes three-year federal IELCE Request for Proposals (RFP) aligned with the priorities in the approved State Unified Plan.
- February/March 2017: IDOE provides a bidder's conference and technical assistance to inquiries from potential eligible entities.
- February/March 2017: IDOE establishes a review panel free of conflicts of interests to review and score IELCE grant applications.
- March 2017: Due date for IELCE grant applications.
- March/April 2017: Reviewers review and score IELCE grant applications.
- April/May 2017: IDOE announces IELCE grant applicants that will receive funding.
- July 1, 2017: IELCE grant providers begin grant cycle, programming, and funding.

IDOE plans to issue continual guidance and technical assistance to eligible providers on how to co-enroll participants in occupational training, as appropriate, and how section 243 funds may be used to provide occupational training as part of an integrated education and training program.

**Requested Revision(s)**

Requested Revision - Item partially addressed. Update State Plan narrative.

FINAL REVISIONS: ACCEPTABLE

## **E. State Leadership**

### **1. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out the required State Leadership activities under section 223 of WIOA.**

Iowa's adult education and literacy team is committed to a seamless transition to the required state leadership activities and has identified a number of areas in which services are already being provided through technical assistance or through targeted training. Funds made available under section 222(a)(2) will not exceed more than 12.5 percent of the AEFLA funds. Of the state leadership funds, twenty percent is awarded to local programs to implement required leadership activities under section 223. These local funds are awarded under the general AEFLA grant application according to enrollment in adult education and literacy programs. Activities that support the required leadership activities include:

- A. Alignment studies have been initiated at the state and local level to identify best practices in strategies for integration and collaboration. Several working groups have been formed to address the implementation of WIOA and alignment. The removal of duplication and the addressing of gaps has been identified as a high priority in the ranking of recommendations among core partners. Funds will be used to build the capacity of local programs to coordinate and align services which will include cross-training core partner staff on intake/orientation, eligibility screening, and a common referral process. Additional efforts to align services includes work toward a common distance education platform that integrates education and training of basic skills, employability skills and career and technical education.

In addition, the development of sector partnerships and subsequent career pathway development will continue to be a priority with a focus on aligning services as a participant transitions from adult education through integrated education and training to further their education and employment opportunities. Through the Moving Pathways Forward: Supporting Career Pathways Integration, a three-year technical assistance grant, a state advisory board for career pathways and sector boards has been formed to guide further discussion and development of unified definitions, an approval process and performance measures for evaluating effectiveness.

- B. The state adult education and literacy program supports high quality professional development as demonstrated in the recently adopted Iowa Administrative Code 281:23.7 which defines the responsibility of the programs for providing professional development opportunities for professional and volunteer staff, including:
  - o Proper procedures for administration and reporting;
  - o The development and dissemination of instructional and programmatic practices based on the most rigorous and scientifically valid research available; and
  - o Appropriate reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, distance education, and staff training practices aligned with content standards for adult education.

In addition to responsibilities, standards and minimum professional development hours, plans and monitoring has been incorporated into the administrative code. This has resulted in the use of a professional development online tracking platform for adult education and

literacy programs. The platform tracks instructor plans, hours of professional development attended (including required pre-service), catalogs of state and local offerings of trainings and provides reports to the state on usage, alignment of plans with attended activities as well as classroom observations aligned with Iowa's instructor standards aimed at identifying the application of content standards in practice. By tracking individual and program plans, along with collective classroom observations, state leadership funds can be better targeted for needs that will support professional developments use in the classroom in areas such as, content standards implementation, evidence-based reading instruction (EBRI), adult learning, research-based instructional methodologies, effective program management (universal design), integrated education and training, bridge programming, transition to post-secondary education, use of technology, distance education, serving students with disabilities, and tutor training and recruitment. Contracts for professional development services related to research-based activities include Student Achievement in Reading (STAR) training and technical assistance; EBRI, ESL and Blended Learning study circles; and implementation of content standards.

- C. Technical assistance will be provided to local programs to enhance program effectiveness, increase the ability of providers to meet established program, instructor and performance standards, and fulfill obligations associated with being a one-stop partner. Specific areas of focus include:
- a. Increasing the capacity of instructors and programs to provide quality instruction in the areas of reading, writing, speaking, mathematics, English language acquisition, and distance education via implementation of professional development activities and associated technical assistance such as:
    - STAR training and Evidence-Based Reading Instruction study circles;
    - Writing webinars;
    - Low-literacy alphabets and vocabulary;
    - High-literacy fluency and comprehension;
    - Continued support of Adult Numeracy Initiative (ANI) cohorts;
    - Hosting the first Virtual Conference to highlight distance education and technology integration; and
    - Annual Adult Education and Literacy Summer Institute.
  - b. Enabling local programs to establish, build upon, and maintain effective relationships with their regional core partners with common training on a system orientation, referral process, data sharing/reporting, integration of education with occupational training, and sector partnership and career pathway development.
  - c. Using technology to improve program effectiveness through a professional development tracking platform, developing online repositories of reviewed and aligned lesson plans, online training through customized modules and technical assistance focused on identifying and utilizing technology to enhance instruction, programming, and distance education.
- D. Iowa's adult education and literacy team use a variety of methods to ensure that information about proven or promising practices and models is disseminated to local programs, practitioners and participants. These will include activities such as:
- Local program site visits;
  - A monthly electronic PD newsletter with information about training opportunities, high-quality resources, and promising practices for instruction and programming;
  - Sessions at state and local conferences, including the first virtual conference, will showcase promising practices and models;
  - Webinars showcasing promising practices and models;
  - Job descriptions with embedded professional development activities based on the adopted Iowa administrative code; and
  - Dissemination of standards and annually updated handbooks.

Local programs are evaluated for effectiveness by the IDOE through their status update, oversight of data integrity, fiscal monitoring as well as desktop and site visits. For programs with reported findings associated with the administration of their grant, a corrective action plan is developed and approved by the state to track continuous improvement in identified areas of concern.

## **2. Describe how the State will use the funds to carry out permissible State Leadership Activities under section 223 of WIOA, if applicable.**

Iowa's adult education and literacy team provides activities such as the operation of professional development programs; the provision of technology assistance, including staff training; program improvement and support; alignment studies with standards and competencies, especially curricula incorporating 21st century skills, workplace readiness activities and phonemic awareness; coordination with other agencies to increase enrollment and successful completion in adult education programs; and linkages with post-secondary institutions.

Currently, communities of practice exist to help disseminate information to providers. Evidence-based instruction in writing, reading, and math has been driven by a cadre of trainers (STAR, numeracy academy, and former CASAS writing trainers). In addition, trainers involved with the Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) have been able to offer specialized ESL and speaking training and develop strategies to address multi-level instruction. Training in these core subject areas has focused on the lead standards approach, promoted by education expert, Dr. Robert Marzano, and others which offers instructors a method for translating standards into curriculum by utilizing three interrelated action steps: identify lead standards; design coherent units of instruction; and conduct lesson studies. Adopting the lead-standards approach brings about greater coherence, provides focus, and ensures that standards are covered in a logical and effective manner.

Surveys have been conducted to establish a baseline of current practices and levels of integration for the one-stop centers. Based on this information, guiding documents will be developed and disseminated to assist eligible funded programs in their roles and responsibilities associated with partnering with the one-stop centers. Trainings will accompany these documents to assist with implementation and help address barriers to ensure seamlessly delivery for the participant.

Online professional development courses make it possible for Iowa's adult education and literacy team to provide information without disrupting local programs' service for adults. Improved consistency of instruction and reduced travel costs for trainers and participants are also important considerations for implementing distance learning. Online courses can be accessed at the convenience of the educator, thereby enabling new instructors to begin learning about their roles and responsibilities immediately. Iowa's adult education and literacy team is continually developing a repository for lesson plans and expanding online professional development courses in adult education. An integrated professional development platform enables local programs to submit additional online or face to face professional development opportunities offered throughout the state.

The professional development committee, which consists of local program coordinators, adult education and literacy instructors, and state staff, is designed to prioritize and coordinate state level staff development activities. This program year will see a number of changes to professional development as teacher effectiveness strategies are reviewed by the committee. Policies on professional development will help establish adult education and literacy expectations for the state. Professional Development standards will assist programs in providing state approved targeted training that is aimed at improving quality instruction to adult learners. The main targets for Instructional System improvements include:

- Develop and disseminate guidance, documents, and models to align state policy with the qualification of staff and implement instructional standards for classroom management and high quality instructional practices;
- Expand the use of the STAR reading program with each funded program implementing the evidence based strategies in reading instruction; and
- Incorporate the professional development platform to support program and individual continuous quality improvement.

Additional activities supported by state leadership funds are evaluated against the following criteria:

- statewide implementation, adoption, and diffusion into adult literacy instructional strategies, methodologies and curriculum infusion;
- Programs' participation on state leadership committee;
- Programs' alignment of professional development to Iowa's Adult Education and Literacy Professional Development Standards <http://bit.ly/IowaDepartmentofEducation>;
- Alignment with Iowa Administrative Code (IAC):281.23;
- Implementation of standards based instruction: lead standards approach; designing coherent units of instruction; conducting lesson studies; participating in peer groups; and engaging in classroom observations for continuous quality improvement;
- Long-term improvement in program outcomes measured by the state and local program's ability to continually meet the state negotiated benchmark levels; and
- Adult learner assistance to effectively meet personal and program literacy goals.

## F. Assessing Quality

Describe how the eligible agency will assess the quality of providers of adult education and literacy activities under title II and take actions to improve such quality, including providing the activities described in section 223(a)(1)(B) of WIOA.

The Iowa Department of Education's Adult Education and Literacy team uses various means of assessment in an annual and ongoing evaluation process of local entities including: professional development evaluations; site and desktop monitoring; program status updates; monthly performance reviews; and quarterly financial reviews. The results of these processes determine program improvement actions and program improvement plans.

- A. **Professional Development Evaluation.** Participants are surveyed after all workshops, conference presentations, and professional development offerings in compliance with Iowa's Professional Development standards to evaluate and provide feedback on the activity or event. Through the state sponsored professional development platform, My Learning Plan, all professional development offerings are available for registration, the tracking of hours, individual professional development plans, and evaluation forms. The platform is also designed to collect individual classroom observations to track the implementation of professional development in instruction to determine if the training impacted student outcomes and to determine areas where additional training may be needed. The annual training plan includes Iowa's priorities derived from input from surveys and training requests through the professional development platform, and guidance from a statewide professional development leadership council. Survey results and requests are reviewed with the professional development leadership council to decide if the training is technical assistance or a professional development opportunity and how best to deliver and define the objectives. Annual priority areas include:

- *New Coordinator Training.* Provides new coordinators with information such as federal and State guidelines, data collection and National Reporting System (NRS) reporting, and resources needed to administer their programs.
- *Data Reporting and Program Improvement Training.* Provides training on the fundamentals of the NRS. Topics include monitoring, data analysis and collection, types of data and measures, assessments, data quality, and related information.
- *Instructor Training.* Provides information and resources to support instruction in the areas of high school equivalency preparation, evidence based reading instruction, math, college and career readiness, career awareness and planning, and career pathways instructional strategies.

Professional development offered by local entities is required and is supported by the allocation of state leadership funds to focus on priority areas.

Actions Taken to Improve Quality. In state sponsored professional development, changes are made to future trainings based on input from participants. Data is compiled from the professional development platform based on local entities instructors attending trainings, number of professional development hours attended, evaluations, individual professional development plans and classroom observations to make data-driven decisions on future trainings. As such, consistent inefficiencies throughout local entities are addressed by the state as priority areas. Inefficiencies that are isolated to a local area is required to be addressed in their status update - consistent inefficiencies require an improvement plan.

- B. **Site and Desktop Monitoring.** Iowa is currently in the process of updating and aligning the adult education and literacy monitoring to include program standards that address WIOA implementation, along with a quality assurance system that will ensure student performance improvement, financial accountability, program quality, and regulatory compliance of local providers in accordance with federal laws and regulations that is risk based. The risk assessment can be used as a self-assessment tool, but is annually conducted by the state to evaluate variables associated with the program standards that determines the monitoring strategy appropriate for each local entity, desktop or onsite.

Actions Taken to Improve Quality. If noncompliance finding(s) are identified, corrective action will be implemented through a program improvement plan within 45 days of the monitoring. The corrective action must identify the findings and specific strategies the local entity will implement to ensure that finding(s) have been resolved. While areas of recommendations does not require corrective action, local entities may include improvement strategies that will be implemented in the upcoming year of funding.

- C. **Program Status Update.** For each continuing year after a competition, local entities are responsible for reporting back on strategies implemented during the program year and to address goal and performance areas requiring continuous improvement. Documented evidence of implementation for the previous year is required that can include qualitative and quantitative examples. Improvement strategies for any unmet performance and for each performance target that is not at least 90 percent achieved is required, detailing plans and other actions taken to improve quality in the upcoming year of funding. Status update forms are created on the grant management system and is able to collect documentation or evidence of implementation in any format provided by the local entity. Ad hoc reports are able to be generated comparing applications with updates within and across local entities. This information is used to track continuous quality improvement in the programs. Specific targets are required for updating which can include: enrollment, post-testing rates,

educational functioning level gains, transitioning services and integrated education and training participation.

Actions Taken to Improve Quality. Status updates that fail to include sufficient documentation or continuous improvement will be negotiated back through the grant management system for additional information. Review of the updates are conducted by a panel. Technical assistance is provided for each local entity that has an update negotiated back for revisions. This assistance can include strategies related to goal setting, examples of documentation, or clarifying definitions.

- D. **Monthly Performance Review.** Conducting data integrity reports and monthly reporting of student records are requirements of Iowa's Assessment policy. This data is pulled from the online data management system and reviewed for validity. The following data elements are reviewed: Participant educational levels; Monthly attendance; Hours of instruction; Monthly exiting of students absent from the program for 90 days with no scheduled services; and Assignment of a college issued identification number. Key data elements are posted on the department's website for tracking local entities progress toward targets - this data includes NRS enrollment and High School Equivalency Diplomas awarded. Each program is also assessed for post-test percentage and progress toward the state negotiated educational functioning level benchmarks among participants served. While this data is available to each program at any time through the data management system, the state's review is conducted at least monthly.

Actions Taken to Improve Quality. Performance reports are being tied to continuous improvement plans with required improvement action plans for any data elements that is not being updated on a monthly basis. Local entities that do not report their data are in non-compliance to Iowa's Assessment policy. Iowa's adult education and literacy funded programs are allocated funds based on performance. Lack of data limits the ability for the state to make data-driven decisions. In addition to technical assistance on data reporting, NRS guidelines and the implementation of Iowa's Assessment policy, best practices and recommendations are provided to assist the program in developing their improvement plan.

- E. **Quarterly Financial Reviews.** Through the grant management system, Iowa grants, quarterly claims from each local entity is reviewed by the state adult education and literacy team for allowable and allocable use of AEFLA funds. This review includes documentation for each expenditure against the budget and allocation for each local entity. There are three levels of approval, along with the requirement for original signed invoice. The financial review also tracks funds from state leadership that is allocated to each program for the purpose of implementing required leadership activities described in detail by the application from the local entity.

Actions Taken to Improve Quality. Financial reviews that are non-compliant are negotiated back for editing. These negotiations include outreach for technical assistance to both the program coordinator and fiscal agent, if necessary. Clarification on expectations is offered along with corrective actions. Due to the layers of approval needed, each level has the ability to negotiate back if necessary for correction or additional documentation. Amendments to the budget can be requested in alignment with the caps for correction and administrative percentages. These amendments are reviewed and approved based on the rationale provided by the local entity. Each amendment creates a new budget, however each previous budget version is kept in the grant management system for tracking. Changes in the budget and submissions of claims are time stamped to ensure timely response and processing.

A Program Improvement Plan (PIP) is required for any assessment that does not meet the required standard or demonstrate improvement for each negotiated target during the competition and in the continuing years. These plans are developed in partnership with the department to ensure clarity in their actionable elements. With funding tied to performance, programs are incentivized to meet state negotiated benchmarks.

## Certifications

States must provide written and signed certifications that

1. The plan is submitted by the State agency that is eligible to submit the plan. **Yes**
2. The State agency has authority under State law to perform the functions of the State under the program. **Yes**
3. The State legally may carry out each provision of the plan. **Yes**
4. All provisions of the plan are consistent with State law. **Yes**
5. A State officer, specified by title in the certification, has authority under State law to receive, hold, and disburse Federal funds made available under the plan. **Yes**
6. The State officer who is submitting the plan, specified by the title in the certification, has authority to submit the plan. **Yes**
7. The agency that is submitting the plan has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan. **Yes**
8. The plan is the basis for State operation and administration of the program. **Yes**

## Certification Regarding Lobbying

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of an agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.



(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

## Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:  
If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Applicant's Organization     **Iowa Department of Education**

Full Name of Authorized Representative:     **Ryan M. Wise**

Title of Authorized Representative:     **Director and Executive Officer of the State Board of Education**

SF LLL Form – Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only if applicable)  
(<http://www2.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/appforms.html>). If applicable, please print, sign, and email to OCTAE\_MAT@ed.gov

## Assurances

The State Plan must include assurances that:

1. The eligible agency will expend funds appropriated to carry out title II of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) only in a manner consistent with fiscal requirements under section 241(a) of WIOA (regarding supplement and not supplant provisions).     **Yes**
2. The eligible agency will ensure that there is at least one eligible provider serving each local area, as defined in section 3(32) of WIOA.     **Yes**
3. The eligible agency will not use any funds made available under title II of WIOA for the purpose of supporting or providing programs, services, or activities for individuals who are not "eligible individuals" within the meaning of section 203(4) of WIOA, unless it is providing programs, services or activities related to family literacy activities, as defined in section 203(9) of WIOA.     **Yes**
4. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be delivered in combination with integrated education and training activities;     **Yes**

5. The Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education program under section 243(a) of WIOA will be designed to (1) prepare adults who are English language learners for, and place such adults in, unsubsidized employment in in-demand industries and occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency and (2) integrate with the local workforce development system and its functions to carry out the activities of the program; and **Yes**

6. Using funds made available under title II of WIOA to carry out a program for criminal offenders within a correctional institution, the eligible agency will give priority to serving individuals who are likely to leave the correctional institution within five years of participation in the program. **Yes**